

Application Ser. No. 10/563,140

Title: A MILKING DEVICE AND A METHOD OF HANDLING A MILKING DEVICE

Group Art Unit: 3643, Examiner: R. Thomas Price Jr.

Amendment and Response to Office Action dated April 8, 2008

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A milking device operable in a milking state and a cleaning state, the device including:

a milk-transporting member which includes at least one teatcup to be attached to a teat of an animal to be milked and is arranged to permit the transporting of milk from the teat to a milk-collecting member during the milking state, wherein the milk-transporting member is connectable to a relatively low pressure for achieving said transporting by sucking milk from the teat to the milk-collecting member via the milk-transporting member during the milking state; and

a gas conduit for the introduction of a gas into the milk-transporting member during the milking state in order to enhance said transporting of milk, wherein the gas conduit has a first end connected to the milk transporting member and includes a gas inlet member for the introduction of said gas into the gas conduit,

wherein the gas conduit beyond the gas inlet member has a second end which is connectable to a relatively low pressure for permitting a flow of a cleaning fluid from the milk-transporting member through the gas conduit during the cleaning state, and

wherein the device includes a cleaning device arranged to deliver the cleaning fluid to the teatcup for permitting said flow through the gas conduit during the cleaning state, said cleaning device including a cleaning nozzle to be introduced into the teatcup, and a supply unit for supplying the cleaning fluid to the cleaning nozzle for said delivery of the cleaning fluid.

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2. (previously presented) A milking device according to claim 1, wherein the gas inlet member includes an opening which communicates with a relatively high pressure that is higher than said relatively low pressure.

3. (previously presented) A milking device according to claim 2, wherein said relatively high pressure is formed by the surrounding environment.

4. (previously presented) A milking device according to claim 1, wherein the gas inlet member is provided at a distance from the first end and the milk-transporting member.

5. (previously presented) A milking device according to claim 1, wherein the relatively low pressure to the milk-transporting member and the relatively low pressure to the gas conduit are provided by at least one vacuum pump.

6. (previously presented) A milking device according to claim 5, wherein the vacuum pump is connected to the milk-collecting member via a vacuum conduit.

7. (cancelled)

8. (currently amended) A milking device according to claim ~~[[7]]~~ 1, wherein the cleaning device is arranged to deliver the cleaning fluid to the teatcup for permitting said flow to the milk-collecting member.

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9. (previously presented) A milking device according to claim 8, wherein the cleaning device is arranged to deliver the cleaning fluid to the teatcup for permitting said flow through the milk-transporting member.

10. (cancelled)

11. (previously presented) A milking device according to claim 1, wherein the gas conduit includes a valve arranged between the gas inlet member and the second end, wherein the valve is adapted to be closed during the milking state and to be open during at least a part of the cleaning state.

12. (previously presented) A milking device according to claim 1, wherein the first end of the gas conduit is connected to the teatcup.

13. (previously presented) A milking device according to claim 1, wherein the milk-transporting member also includes at least one milk hose, wherein the first end of the gas conduit is connected to the milk hose.

14. (previously presented) A milking device according to claim 1, wherein the milk-transporting member also includes a claw, wherein the first end of the gas conduit is connected to the claw.

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15. (previously presented) A method of handling a milking device, the milking device including at least one milk-transporting member including at least one teatcup, during a milking state and a cleaning state, the method including the steps of:

attaching the teatcup of the milk-transporting member to a teat of an animal to be milked;

transporting milk during the during the milking state from the teat to a milk-collecting member by sucking milk to the milk-collecting member via the teatcup and the milk-transporting member by applying a relatively low pressure to the milk-transporting member; and

supplying a gas into the milk-transporting member via a gas conduit in order to permit said transporting of milk, wherein the gas conduit has a first end which is connected to the milk-transporting member and a second end and further includes a gas inlet member for the introduction of said gas into the gas conduit positioned between the first end and the second end;

and including the further step of supplying a cleaning fluid from the milk-transporting member through the gas conduit during the cleaning state by applying a relatively low pressure to the gas conduit at the second end of the gas conduit beyond the gas inlet member.

16. (previously presented) A method according to claim 15, including the further step of communicating the gas inlet member via an opening with a relatively high pressure that is higher than said relatively low pressure.

17. (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein said high pressure is formed by the surrounding environment.

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18. (previously presented) A method according to claim 15, including the further step of delivering the cleaning fluid by means of a cleaning device to the teatcup for permitting said flow through the gas conduit during the cleaning state.

19. (previously presented) A method according to claim 18, including the further step of delivering the cleaning fluid to the teatcup for permitting said flow to the milk-collecting member.

20. (previously presented) A method according to claim 19, including the further step of delivering the cleaning fluid to the teatcup for permitting said flow through the milk-transporting member to the milk-collecting member.

21. (previously presented) A method according to claim 15, wherein the gas conduit includes a valve arranged between the gas inlet member and the second end, the method including the further steps of:

closing the valve during the milking state and opening the valve during at least a part of the cleaning state.

22. (previously presented) A method according to claim 15, wherein the cleaning device includes a cleaning nozzle to be introduced into the teatcup, and a supply unit, characterised by including the further steps of:

supplying said cleaning fluid by means of the supply unit to a cleaning nozzle, and delivering said fluid into the teatcup by means of the cleaning nozzle.